

Facts about the Legislative Commission on Aging

January 2013



Did you know?

CT is the 7th oldest state in the nation and our population of 65+ is projected to grow by 64% from 2006 - 2030!

Our mission is to serve as an objective, credible source of information on issues affecting Connecticut's older adults, to prepare our state for the needs of its soaring older adult population and to provide accountability within government.

Who we are: Created twenty years ago, the Commission on Aging (CGS §17b-420) is a non-partisan research and public policy agency located at the State Capitol.

What we do (a sample):

- **Lead public/private-sector efforts** to promote public policy reflecting best practices and national trends on multi-faceted aging issues including: health care, long-term care, transportation, financial security, housing, employment, and many others;
- **Analyze demographic, economic, quality of life and service delivery trends** in aging, delivering objective research and generating reports to guide sound public policy;
- **Prepare Connecticut for the changing demographics** that will impact nearly every facet of society;
- **Leads efforts to streamline Medicaid long-term care services and supports**, which represent 13% of the state budget;
- **Present solutions:** including proposing recommendations and leading initiatives related to long-term services and supports that saves the state hundreds of millions of dollars annually;
- **Develop and comment on legislative proposals** and testify before the Connecticut General Assembly;
- **Review and comment on state departmental policies, procedures, structures and outcomes** that affect older adults and persons with disabilities, providing accountability and objectivity;
- **Establish and maintain partnerships with diverse stakeholders**, including the business community, non-profits and governmental entities;
- **Empower people**, working with state partners to create, maintain, and promote CT's Long-Term Services and Supports Website www.ct.gov/longtermcare and;
- **Reach out statewide to thousands of Connecticut residents**, by hosting public informational forums, hosting a regular radio show on WTIC, utilizing social media, attending legislators' senior fairs, etc

CoA Team

Appointed volunteer members:

William L. Eddy
Jeanne Franklin
Sharon Gesek
Raymond A. Guenter
Nancy Heaton
Nancy Sullivan Hodkoski
Judith M. Jencks
Gerard J. Kerins, MD
Mary Ellen Klinck
Christianne Kovel
Richard C. Memmott, Sr.
John Nelson
Sherry Ostrout
James L. Pellegrino
Ed Roman
Dianne Stone
Susan Tomanio
Penelope L. Young

Staff

Julia Evans Starr
Robert Norton
Deborah Migneault

Leadership on Major Initiatives and Policies (highlights):

- CoA has served as the legislative staff for the **Grandparents' Visitation Rights Task Force** (SA 11-12) and the **Aging in Place Task Force** (SA 12-6). The GVR Task Force was charged with studying the legal and social issues related to grandparents' access to visitation and producing a report with recommendations that are consistent with the state constitution. As a result of the task force's work PA 12-137 was signed into law. The AIP Task force was charged with studying how the state can encourage aging in place. The [report](#) was submitted the General Assembly's Aging Committee in December 2012.
- CoA was elected co-chair of the **Money Follows the Person Steering Committee**, a public-private partnership that advises on the implementation of this multimillion dollar federal-state program as well as related initiatives.
- CoA serves a chair of the **Money Follows the Person Workforce Development Subcommittee**. The subcommittee is working to build a robust long-term services and supports workforce that is sustainable, respected and skilled. See the [report here](#).
- CoA co-chairs, leads, and manages the legislatively-mandated **Long-Term Care Advisory Council**, a diverse group of advocates, providers, and consumers (older adults and persons with disabilities) providing a collective voice and direction to long-term care issues in the state. Collaborates on the development of the state LTSS Plan. See the most recent [LTSS plan here](#).
- CoA serves as a member of the highly active **Council on Medical Assistance Program Oversight**. This committee offers comment and oversight on many initiatives resulting from Affordable Care Act such as: the Medicare-Medicaid Enrollee Demonstration.
- CoA created, chairs and manages the **CT Elder Action Network**, a dynamic group of leaders in the field of aging in Connecticut;
- CoA partners with Wider Opportunities for Women and the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women in the **Elder Economic Security Initiative**. Information about this initiative can be found [here](#).
- CoA improves access to information for older adults, persons with disabilities, families and caregivers: working with OPM, created and maintains the state's [Long-Term Care web site](#). The web site received over 60,000 visits last year alone and is considered the online single-point of entry in the state. Currently, the CoA is advising stakeholders (e.g. consultants and public and private agencies) in an initiative to merge the long-term care website into a new website that will be part of a broader Department of Social Services information and referral portal.

From a budget perspective:

- CoA fills a nonpartisan leadership role within the state, including serving in an advisory capacity to the CT General Assembly, Executive Branch agencies and the Governor.
- CoA has 21 unpaid members – from communities across the state and with diverse disciplines – who volunteer their time and expertise to guide, inform, and add dimension to its work.
- The extremely modest budget (.001% of the state budget) of \$253,506 for its state Capitol-based three-person staff delivers a sound and wise investment in Connecticut's future.
- The CoA's performance, as illustrated in its Results-Based Accountability reports, affirms it is a low-cost, highly efficient and effective agency. CoA's [RBA Report can be found here](#).
- CoA's oversight directly relates to the one of the largest components of the state budget – Medicaid (representing 13% of the overall state budget).

For more information, please contact the Commission on Aging, at 860-240-5200.